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Government increases support for women's emergency shelters

Edmonton... The Alberta government has invested an additional \$1.5 million in women's emergency shelters to help individuals and families affected by family violence.

"Women's emergency shelters across the province do an incredible job helping victims of family violence rebuild their lives, and this extra funding strengthens the ability of Alberta's shelters to provide quality services to those in need," said Janis Tarchuk, Minister of Children's Services.

The funding boost includes \$400,000 to establish the Women's Shelter Leadership Bursary to support the professional development of senior staff working with family violence prevention programs and women's shelters.

"The bursary helps with the recruitment, retention and development of staff who provide tremendous leadership in preventing family violence," said Minister Tarchuk.

The remainder of the \$1.5 million funding increase to women's emergency shelters includes:

- nearly \$700,000 to help address the child care needs of parents who go to shelters;
- nearly \$250,000 to five rural shelters to help provide emergency services; and
- \$100,000 to support training of frontline shelter workers.

An additional \$463,000 to support a three per cent salary increase for staff of contracted women's shelters was announced in March.

"Alberta's women's shelters do an excellent job and this funding will make it even better," said Jan Reimer, spokesperson for the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters. "I'm particularly pleased about the education bursaries and staff training fund, which are so important to shelter staff in meeting the needs of women and children seeking shelter services. I would like to thank Minister Tarchuk for her leadership in addressing this need."

The funding increase helps address recommendations from a review of the Women's Emergency Shelter Program. The review considered input from more than 200 stakeholders and looked for ways to build on strengths and address the challenges facing Alberta's women's emergency shelters. The government will work with the review advisory committee, as well as community partners and key stakeholders, to further address the review's recommendations. The report is available online at www.familyviolence.gov.ab.ca.

Preventing family violence is part of Premier Ed Stelmach's priority to provide safe and secure communities. Other priorities for government are to: govern with integrity and transparency, manage growth pressures, improve Albertans' quality of life and build a stronger Alberta.

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